

DEVELOPMENT OF AN EMERGENCY KIT SERVICE PROJECT

Overview: A recent study commissioned by the Department of Homeland Security and conducted by Macro International, Inc., has shown that most Americans still lack an emergency kit or do not have key components at home to assemble a kit in the event of an emergency. The purpose of the Emergency Kit Service Project is to offer participants an understanding of the components necessary for a 72-hour emergency kit and to directly involve attendees in the assembly and packing of the kits. By making kits, participants are more likely to assemble a kit for their home, work and car and take an active role in their community to help educate local residents on the importance of having these necessary resources on hand in the event of an emergency.

Partners: Examples of key partners to consider when hosting this type of service project are as follows:

- Local United Way
- Local Volunteer Center
- Local Public Housing Authority
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security-Regional Office
- Faith Based Organizations
- Manufacturer of Approved Emergency Kits, i.e. American Preparedness
- Local American Red Cross Affiliate
- Corporate Volunteer Council
- Citizen Corps Councils
- City/County/State Government Emergency Management Offices
- Service Clubs and Organizations
- National Service Programs, i.e. AmeriCorps, Senior Corps
- Schools and Affiliated Groups

Selection of the Type of Kit for the Service Project: It is critical to select the type of kit that best fits the needs of the local community. We selected the 72-Hour Emergency Kit because the contents, design, and suitability met Red Cross standards and the kit is also on the General Services Administration approved product list. In addition, the kit has a five-year shelf life and the contents meet various government approval ratings. It is, however, designed to support one person for 72 hours, so it is viewed as a starter kit and at the very least will provide some assistance to more than one person but for a shorter period of time.

Disaster Kit Contents: The Disaster Kit you have just assembled is a 72-hour disaster kit for one-person. It is a great first step to becoming better prepared to respond to a disaster or emergency. This kit contains the following items:

Disaster Kit Contents

- 10 Datrex Emergency Drinking Water Pouches
- 1 Datrex Food Bar Packet (2,400 calorie)
- 1 Thermal Blanket
- 2 Body/Hand Warmers (12 hours of warmth each)_
- 1 Lightweight Poncho with Hood
- 1 Flashlight with "D" Cell Batteries (included)
- 2 12-hours light sticks
- 1 Deck Playing Cards
- 1 Dust Mask
- 1 Whistle



Disaster Kit Hygiene Pack

- 1 Pocket Tissues Packet
- 1 Set of Wet Wipes
- 1 Biohazard Waste Bag
- 3 Plastic Waste Bags
- 2 Sanitary Napkins

Disaster Kit First Aid Supplies

- 3 2x2" Gauze Pads
- 1 5x9" Abdominal Pad
- 10 1x3" Plastic Strips
- 3 Antiseptic Wipes
- 3 Antibiotic Ointment
- 1 Pair Latex Gloves

Assembly vs. Purchasing Pre-Assembled Kits: One of the major goals for this service project is to give participants a hands-on experience in assembling the kits so they have a better understanding of the contents and the ease in assembling a kit. Over three tons of supplies were needed to make up the 1,000 emergency kits assembled at this conference. It is anticipated that the learning process of assembling the kits will prompt participants to take the initiative to organize this type of service project and to become an advocate to secure kits for needy populations within their community.

Next Steps After the Assembly: For individuals on fixed or low incomes, it can be very difficult to buy the extra items necessary to sustain a family during a disaster. For that reason, the kits assembled as part of this project will be given to the Seattle and King County Housing Authorities for distribution to residents of public housing units in the metropolitan area. In addition to the kit, housing authority officials will develop an information card written in the language(s) most common in the locations where the kits will be distributed that describes the contents of the kit and where to obtain additional disaster related information. Additionally, an orientation session will be offered to residents so they know when to use the kit and how to summon assistance during and after the emergency.

Other Steps to Take for Improved Preparedness: Many websites, including www.ready.gov, contain critical information so people can become better prepared to withstand an emergency or disaster. In addition to having a kit, people need a plan, and to become informed as to the nature of potential disasters in their particular part of the state or nation. These messages are contained in the above-mentioned website and are also written in Spanish. You are also encouraged to take action to further prepare yourself through training in First Aid and CPR, taking Community Emergency Response Training (CERT), and becoming involved in your community as a Red Cross volunteer or by joining your local Citizen Corps Council.

Additional Resources: For information on this service project including emergency kits, local project partners and sponsors, contact Bill Basl at bill.basl@ofm.wa.gov. For information on disaster preparedness initiatives sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation, contact Diana Rothe-Smith at dsmith@pointsoflight.org.

In addition to your local county or city emergency management offices, information on disaster preparedness can be found at the following websites:

- www.dhs.gov
- www.ready.gov
- www.helpindisaster.org
- www.citizencorps.gov
- www.redcross.org